

AccessLetter

Cambridge Commission for
Persons with Disabilities

Getting Ready for Emergencies

When the World Trade Center was attacked on September 11, 2001 some people with disabilities were able to safely evacuate those buildings, others were left behind and perished. When Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans last year, some residents with disabilities evacuated safely, others were left stranded. In both cases, many individuals' chances of achieving safe evacuation seemed to be better depending on how well they had prepared in advance for emergencies.



Clearly, federal, state and local governments each have important roles to play when it comes to managing emergencies. But each individual citizen also has to take some responsibility for

emergency preparations. In particular, people with disabilities can't necessarily assume that all government agencies have adequately anticipated their individual emergency needs. Here are a few specific steps you can take to increase your chances of surviving an emergency:

Designate an emergency "buddy." Work out an arrangement in advance with at least one friend, neighbor, or family member that he or she will be your "buddy" to stick with you in the event of an emergency. If you work outside the home, you will want to designate buddies at your workplace as well as at home. Pick people who are level-headed and responsible, who you can trust to provide you whatever assistance you need if an emergency happens.

(More Getting Ready on Page 2)

Disability Parking Alert

If you still have one of the old disability parking placards from the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) that looks like this and goes on the dashboard, then you need to replace it with one that hangs from the rear view mirror, bears an expiration date and the holder's photo ID. The old placards look like this:



Old RMV Placards Being Phased Out

The old style RMV placard will **no longer be valid** after December 31, 2006. In Cambridge the fine for parking in a disability parking space without the appropriate placard is \$100, and the fine for misuse of a placard (one that does not belong to you) is \$500. The eligible holder of an old style placard can replace it with the new hanging-style placard for FREE. Contact the Medical Affairs Branch of the RMV for more information at 617-351-9222 or 1-800-858-3926 or write the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Medical Affairs, P.O. Box 55889, Boston, MA 02205.



New Placard

Getting Ready (Cont'd)

Make a plan and practice it. Develop a plan describing how you will respond in the event of various emergencies. Describe in detail the routes you will follow if you must evacuate your home or workplace. Practice your evacuation routes with your buddies at least once a year. If you have a mobility impairment and your evacuation route includes stairs, teach your buddies how to safely assist you down a flight of stairs. Write down a list of your emergency contacts and your essential medical information, and give copies of this list to your buddies. Review and update your emergency plan yearly.

Prepare an emergency kit.

Get a large canvas bag with a zipper, or a sturdy box with handles and a lid. Then fill your kit with one to two weeks' worth of non-perishable food (energy bars and canned food with easy-pull lids are a few good choices), bottled water, medications, first-aid & other medical supplies and a copy of your emergency contact list. Add some warm clothes, a battery operated radio, a flashlight and a towel or two.

If you have a guide dog or other service animal, store some food and whatever other supplies your animal needs. Label all your items. Place your kit in a handy spot near the exit so you can grab it with a moment's notice if you have to evacuate quickly. Update your kit (check batteries, expiration dates, etc.) every 6 to 12 months.

Sign up with the Cambridge 911 Center. People with disabilities needing to call 911 in Cambridge can register for a voluntary disability indicator program. Once you sign up for this program, whenever you call 911, a special code will appear on the 911 call-takers screen that alerts the call-taker that a person residing at your address may require special assistance during

an emergency. The indicator codes cover several disability categories including: 1) People on a life-support system, 2) People with mobility impairments, 3) People who are legally blind, 4) People who are deaf or hard of hearing, 5) People who have speech impairments, and 6) People with cognitive impairments (e.g., Alzheimer's disease). The information is kept strictly confidential at the Cambridge 911 Center and only appears when a 911 call is received at the Center from the registered phone number tagged with the disability indicator. To learn more about the program and whether it might be

useful for you, call the Cambridge Emergency Communications Department at 617-349-6911. For additional information you can also visit the Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board on the Web at www.mass.gov/e911 and click on "Disability Indicator Program."

Get more information.

Upon request, the Commission for Persons with Disabilities will send Cambridge residents with disabilities a free "Emergency Preparedness Wheel" which contains much useful information about how to

prepare for various types of emergencies. The wheel has a magnetic strip that allows you to attach it to your refrigerator or other convenient metal object for quick reference. For more information on preparing for emergencies, contact the National Organization on Disability at (202) 293-5960 (voice) or (202) 293-5968 (TTY) or visit www.nod.org and click on Emergency Preparedness Initiative.



Emergency Preparedness Wheel

Public Policy Fellowship for 2007

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation is seeking outstanding professionals working in the field of inclusive services and supports for people with mental

retardation, intellectual and developmental disabilities for an intensive one-year Public Policy Fellowship in Washington, D.C. This fellowship is intended for individuals in mid-career and offers exciting opportunities to be involved in policy and legislative development through work on the staff of a congressional committee or federal agency. Participants will focus on key areas such as special education, health and mental health care for persons with mental retardation, childcare, housing, justice, and child welfare issues.

Since its founding in 1946, the Foundation has supported the creation of practical programs to benefit persons with mental retardation, their families and their communities. Fellows will participate in an advocacy training workshop, national disability policy seminars and the intensive week-long Bioethics course at Georgetown University. The expectation is that fellows will become future leaders in the field of inclusive community supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and will return home after their year in Washington to make significant contributions to policy and program development in their home state or continue to advance their work on the national level.

The fellowship includes a stipend and relocation expenses. Selected fellows must be prepared to live in the Washington, DC area during their fellowship year and to devote themselves full-time to the fellowship. The Fellowship starting date will be negotiated with the selected applicant, but is expected to begin in January of 2007. The program seeks applicants with experience in: 1.) State or national level advocacy for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, 2.) Vocational rehabilitation, education, childcare, child welfare,

law, employment, community organizing, housing or development of inclusive community supports and services, 3.) Health or mental health care for people with mental retardation; or 4.) Development of family training or family support services.

Applicants should submit a 2-4-page letter stating their interest and accomplishments to date, what they hope to do with the knowledge and experience gained from the fellowship; a résumé or a summary of their involvement in the field; and, three letters of support from people familiar with their work. Be sure to include the candidate's name, address, telephone number(s) and e-mail address on the first page. The preferred method of sending application letters and résumés is via e-mail attachment (i.e. not in the body of the e-mail) to Steve Eidelman at <sme@udel.edu>. Letters of support are also encouraged via e-mail but a hard copy on letterhead with the supporter's signature must follow in the mail. The address is:

MRS. EUNICE KENNEDY SHRIVER
The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation
1133 19th Street NW, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
ATTENTION: Professional Public Policy
Fellowship Program

Please direct any questions about the application process to Steven Eidelman at 302-831-2574.

Applications must be sent to the Foundation's office by September 15, 2006. Any applications that are still incomplete or postmarked after the deadline will not be considered. Finalists will be invited to Washington to be interviewed by a panel of Public Policy experts.

Upcoming Events of Interest to the Disability Community

July 5 RSI (repetitive strain injury) Monthly Drop-in Support & Information Meeting (no registration is necessary) on first Wednesday of each month, 6 to 8 pm at 650 Beacon Street in Boston, 4th floor Conference Room, just steps from the MBTA station in Kenmore Square. Be sure to arrive before 7 pm when the lobby door is locked. RSI Action volunteers will answer questions and provide resources and support, including the opportunity to view our provider evaluation book. For more information, call 617-247-6827, check web at <www.rsiaction.org> or email <cnot@rsiaction.org>.

- July 5 **Kayaking for individuals with disabilities at Hopkinton State Park** will be sponsored by Outdoor Recreation of Hopkinton every Wednesday (July 5 to August 9) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Adaptive paddle instructor and lifeguards will be available. Fee is \$5 per person but aides and family members are free. Contact Barry Gold at <info@OutRecHop.com> or 508-435-3965 on or after June 10 to make reservations for one day or the entire 9-week session, or go to <www.OutRecHop.com>.
- July 5 **Weekly support group for adults with LD/ADHD** (learning disabilities & attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) will meet in Cambridge from 6 to 7:30 pm each Wednesday. Currently there are a few openings in this group, so if you are interested, contact Angelica Sawyer at 617-661-3117 in early July. The group meets in the Parish House of Christ (Episcopal) Church at 0 Garden St. close to Harvard Square.
- July 5 **Manic Depression & Depressive Association (MDDA) Bipolar Support Group** meets every Wednesday evening, 7 to 9 pm at McLean Hospital in Belmont (Demarneffe Building, 1st floor lobby). Includes a lecture, 7-8 pm, on the second and fourth Wednesdays. Call 617-855-3665 for more information.
- July 11 **Boston Voice Users** is a group for people who use speech recognition or dictation software. They meet 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at MIT in Building 2, Rm. 142. Go to <www.bostonvoiceusers.com> to find out more about meetings and discussions.
- July 13 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) monthly meeting** – 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30 – 7 p.m. with opportunity for public comment
- July 14 ***destination anywhere* - DEADLINE for entries in a National Juried Exhibit for Young Artists with Disabilities**, sponsored by VSA arts in collaboration with Volkswagen of America. Eligible participants are young artists ages 16-25 living in the United States who have a physical, cognitive or mental disability. The artwork may be representational or abstract, and the theme is to take the viewer to a destination they where they never expected to be. Winners will be announced on August 18, 2006. Grand prize is \$20,000, First prize \$10,000, Second prize \$6000, and twelve Awards of Excellence of \$2000 each. For more information go to <www.vsarts.org/Vwcall> or call Jennifer Colaguori at 202-628-2800, x3885
- July 18 **Disability Policy Consortium (DPC)** monthly meeting on 3rd Tuesday of month, 1-3 p.m. at the State House, Room A-1, in Boston
- July 20 **Accessible Hiking at Middlesex Fells Reservation in Stoneham** will be lead by Brenda Kennedy as part of the Universal Access Program of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Assistive equipment such as Terra Trek manual wheelchairs, baby joggers, walkers, crutches and gait belts, along with teamwork will unite people of all abilities in accessing conventional hiking trails. The program includes some nature interpretation and other fun activities. The cost is \$2 per person, \$4 per family or \$10 for groups. To register call 413-259-0009 or email <gigi.ranno@state.ma.us>.
- July 26 **Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA**, meets 1:00-3:30 p.m. at State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, Conference Room #2. Call 617-973-7507 voice or 617-973-7089 TTY for more information, to request Interpreters, or confirm date and time of meeting. Due to security measures, please bring proper identification to gain entrance to all meetings.
- July 27 **LD/ADHD Task Force** for adults with Learning Disabilities / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is sponsored by Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and meets at MRC State headquarters, 27-48 Wormwood Street in Boston (south of Fort Point Channel) in the 6th floor large

conference room. Business meeting from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information contact Angelica Sawyer at 617-661-3117 voice, 617-497-5257 fax. (There will be no meeting in August; meetings resume in Sept.)

July 28-30 Outdoor Explorations Summer Camp for Girls – Enjoy hiking, ropes course, kayaking and campfire activities and meet other girls with and without disabilities at Bear Hill 4-H Camp in Allenstown, NH. Transportation provided by Outdoor Explorations from Medford or any Red Line T Stop. Cost is \$250 per person; scholarships are available. Another camping session will be held August 11-13. For more information or to register contact Outdoor Explorations at 781-395-4999 voice, 781-395-4184 TTY or <info@outdoorex.org>. Through their adventure programs, training, and community service projects Outdoor Explorations, Inc. enables people of all abilities to discover and value their own and others' unique strengths. They use adaptive equipment, a cooperative attitude, and a lot of good humor to create enjoyable, empowering adventures that help people with all types of disabilities experience the outdoor freedom that others take for granted.

August 2 RSI Monthly Drop-in Group – first Wednesday of the month; see July 5 listing for details.

August 5 Sailing in Boston Harbor – Sponsored by Outdoor Explorations, this adventure is for all ages. The registration fee is \$40. For more information or to register contact Outdoor Explorations at 781-395-4999 voice, 781-395-4184 TTY or <info@outdoorex.org>.

August 8 Boston Voice Users is a group for people who use speech recognition or dictation software. Meets 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. second Tuesday of the month (See July 11th listing for details.)

August 10 Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) monthly meeting – 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30– 7 p.m. with opportunity for public comment

August 11-13 Summer Camp for Girls sponsored by Outdoor Explorations – Join other girls age 10 and up with and without disabilities to enjoy hiking, ropes course, kayaking and campfire activities at Bear Hill 4-H Camp in Allenstown, NH. See listing for July 28-30 for more details.

August 15 Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) monthly meeting on 3rd Tuesday of month, 1-3 p.m. at the State House, Room A-1, in Boston.

August 16 Accessible Hiking program will explore Spectacle Island in Boston Harbor – Sponsored by the Universal Access Program of the DCR. See July 20 listing for details about registration and cost.

August 17 Accessible Hiking program will tour estate at Borderland Park near Sharon – Sponsored by the Universal Access Program of the DCR. See July 20 listing for details about registration and cost.

August 23 Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT), 1-3:30 p.m. at State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, Conference Room 1. Call 617-973-7507 voice or 617-973-7089 TTY for more information or to request interpreters. Due to security measures, please bring proper identification to gain entrance to all meetings

August 24 Accessible Hiking program at Middlesex Fells Reservation near Stoneham– See July 20th listing for registration details and fees.

Sept. 13-15 Aspire, Achieve, Empower: First National Conference on Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities will take place Boston. Take advantage of this groundbreaking event to learn how Partners

for Youth with Disabilities pioneered in the area of building mentoring relationships between youth (ages 6-24) with disabilities and adults with similar disabilities. Learn about different models of mentoring, how it can be used to provide bridges to education and employment, health and recreation, how to screen applicants, and where there is need for more research. The registration fee is \$375 for adults; \$175 for students. All events will be at the Hilton Boston Logan Airport. Register online at <www.regonline.com/pyd> or call 617-556-4075, x19 or email <administrator@pyd.org>. There is still time to sign on as a **corporate sponsor** to help support this event and have your ad in the program; the deadline is July 28. Contact Maureen Gallagher at 617-556-4075, x13 voice, 617-314-2989 TTY or mgallagher@pyd.org.

- Sept. 14 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) monthly meeting** – 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30 to 7 p.m. with opportunity for public comment.
- Sept. 15 **DEADLINE for submitting applications for Fellowship Program in Washington, D.C.** – The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation is accepting applications from qualified professionals for its 2007 Public Policy Fellowship Program. For more information see article on page 2.
- Sept. 16 **Sailing in Boston Harbor** – sponsored by Outdoor Explorations; see August 5 listing for details.
- Sept. 18-19 **Empowering Employers to Build an Inclusive Workforce** – Take advantage of this national conference of the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) that will be held in Boston this year at the Hilton at Logan Airport. Planned especially for Human Resource, Employee Relations or EEO Specialists/Managers, ADA Coordinators and Compliance Officers, Rehabilitation Professionals, and individuals with disabilities, the conference will have three concurrent tracks will address accommodation issues, innovative employment practices, and ADA/legal issues. For details go to <<http://conference.jan.wvu.edu/Symposium.htm>> Registration (limited to 300) can be done online. The fee is \$425 before August 1, \$475 afterwards. For more information contact the Registration Coordinator for JAN at 800-526-7234 (Voice/TTY), 304-293-5407 Fax, <conference@jan.wvu.edu> or write to JAN, West Virginia University, P.O. Box 6080, Morgantown, WV 26506.
- Sept. 23 **Full day Ropes Course in North Andover** for all ages is sponsored by Outdoor Explorations. Ropes courses are designed to provide experiences for groups and individuals that highlight problem solving, teamwork and leadership skills. Consisting of both high and low elements, trained facilitators will guide you and the group through all activities, on and off the ground. Trained facilitators will provide instruction and equipment customized to each individual's needs. The registration fee is \$75 per person. For more information or to register contact Outdoor Explorations at 781-395-4999 voice, 781-395-4184 TTY or <info@outdoorex.org>.

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

The Commission was established in 1979 to act as a clearinghouse on disability and access issues throughout the City of Cambridge. We strive to raise awareness of disability matters, to eliminate discrimination, and to promote equal opportunity for people with all types of disabilities – physical, mental and sensory. The Commission provides information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to individuals and their families, employers, public agencies, businesses and private non-profit organizations.

The goal of our 11-member citizen advisory board, comprised primarily of individuals with disabilities, is to maximize access to all aspects of Cambridge community life. Our regularly scheduled Commission meetings, which always include an opportunity for public comment, are held at 5:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

Access Notice: The City of Cambridge and Commission for Persons with Disabilities do not discriminate on the basis of disability. This newsletter is available in e-mail, large print and other alternative formats upon request. To add your name to our mailing list, to inquire about alternative formats, or for information about other auxiliary aids and services or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, contact CCPD.

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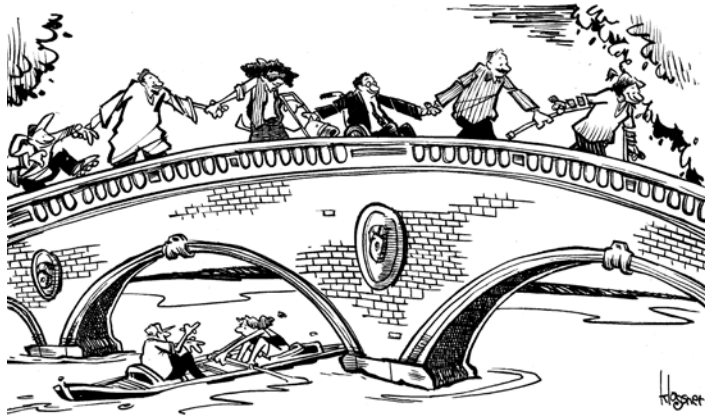
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We welcome your articles, comments, criticisms, and suggestions. Write us!

Read past issues on our website: www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP2/disabilities.cfm

If you would rather receive your copy of Access**Letter** electronically, please provide us with your name and e-mail address. To request that your name be removed from our mailing list, contact us at 617-349-4692 Voice, 617-492-0235 TTY, 617-349-4766 Fax, or cthompson@cambridgema.gov

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